REMARKS

Claims 1-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 5,781,898 to Fukatsu et al. in view of United States Patent No. 5,940,842 to Sakuta. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the features of the present invention are not disclosed or suggested in the cited references. In particular, neither the Fukatsu et al. reference nor the Sakuta reference, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the claimed search system that includes, *inter alia*, an inputting device (or imputing means) inputting query specification information which collectively specifies a plurality of times of a full text search through a plurality of search condition combinations for a comparison of a plurality of search results from the plurality of times of the full text search, as defined in independent Claims 1, 11, 15, and 17. Similarly, the cited references also fail to disclose or suggest a medium with a program for executing a process, where the process includes, *inter alia*, inputting query specification information which collectively specifies a plurality of times of a full text search through a plurality of search condition combinations for a comparison of a plurality of search results from the plurality of times of the full text search, as defined in independent Claim 12. In addition, the cited references also fail to disclose or suggest a medium with a program for executing a process, where the process includes, *inter alia*, obtaining a plurality of search results for a plurality of times of a full text search through a plurality of search condition combinations, and collectively outputting output information

corresponding to a plurality of search results for a comparison of the plurality of search results, as defined in independent Claim 13. Finally, the cited references also fail to disclose or suggest a search method (or a search system) that involves, *inter alia*, obtaining a plurality of search results for a plurality of times of a full text search through a plurality of search condition combinations, each of the combinations representing any search query which includes a plurality of search conditions for a singe time of a full text search, with text information specified by each of the combinations being searched for in each time of the full text search, and collectively outputting output information corresponding to the plurality of search results for a comparison of the plurality of search results, as defined in independent Claims 14 and 16.

Briefly, the present invention relates to an improved searching system in which a plurality of search results from a plurality of full text searches can be obtained, and those results of the plurality of full text searches can be used for comparison against each other. One example of such a search is shown, in part, in Figures 3 and 5. In Figure 3, a multi-dimensional input screen is shown. The lower part of the screen shows that the number of dimensions chosen is four (box 41). Accordingly, across the top of the screen, four dimensions (1st dimension, 2nd dimension, etc.) are all shown. The type of condition (year, database, keyword, etc.) for each of the four dimensions is chosen, as shown by boxes 42, and the number of elements of each condition are chosen, as shown in boxes 43. Finally, the conditions being searched are specified in boxes 44.

A plurality of full text searches are conducted, as shown, for example, on the output screen depicted in Figure 5, and the results can be compared with each other. For example, Figure 5 shows three "hits" in the patent database for the keywords FUJITSU and PARALLEL in 1992; five "hits" for the same keywords in 1993; ten "hits" for the same keywords in 1994; etc. By utilizing the concepts of the present invention, the user can easily compare search results from a plurality of full text searches, without inputting each full text search separately, and without separately displaying (or otherwise receiving) the results of each search. Thus, the present invention provides for a comparison of the plurality of search results from the plurality of times of the full text search, where each of the combinations represents a search query which includes a plurality of search conditions for a single time of the full text search.

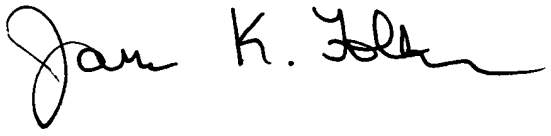
In contrast, the system of the Fukatsu et al. reference relates to a simplified method of prioritizing the search conditions, without requiring that the user know the standard priority order assigned to the mathematical symbols. Instead, in the system of the Fukatsu et al. reference, the priority of operations can be easily set up by the user by merely manipulating the locations of the conditions on the screen. However, the Fukatsu et al. reference fails to disclose or suggest a search in which a plurality of full text searches are conducted, based upon a plurality of search condition combinations, so that the results of these plurality of searches can be compared.

Moreover, although the Sakuta reference does mention full text searches, it also fails to remedy this deficiency. Instead, the Sakuta reference relates to providing expanded information relating to the location of a keyword that has been searched. Accordingly, the Sakuta reference does not remedy the deficiencies discussed above. Thus, for all of the reasons discussed above, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of this §103 rejection of Claims 1-18.

For all of the above reasons, Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the claimed invention. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would aid in the prosecution of the application, or that outstanding issues exist, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

GREER, BURNS & CRAIN, LTD.

By 

James K. Folker
Registration No. 37,538

April 15, 2003

Suite 2500
300 South Wacker Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60606
(312) 360-0080

Customer No. 24978
K:\1503\63544\amd-c.doc